

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In response to the Office Action dated June 15, 2004, claims 1, 7, 11, and 17 have been amended. Claims 1-20 remain in the application. It is not the Applicants' intent to surrender any equivalents because of the amendments or arguments made herein. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

In paragraphs 6-7 of the Office Action, claims 7 and 17 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would otherwise be allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the intervening claims.

The Applicants thank the Examiner and formally recognizes the allowable subject matter of claims 7 and 17. Applicants have rewritten the independent claims to include the subject matter of claims 7 and 17, and respectfully submit that all remaining claims are now in good order for allowance. Such amendments are not made for reasons of patentability, since the subject matter of claims 7 and 17 was allowable and not rejected, and the amendments made herein merely clarify the claims and rewrite the claims in independent format. It is not the intent of the Applicants to surrender any equivalents because of the amendments made herein.

III. Prior Art Rejections

A. The Office Action Rejections

In paragraphs (2)-(3) of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 5-6, 8, 10-13, 15-16, 18, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(c) as being anticipated by Gorsuch, U.S. Patent No. 6,526,034 (Gorsuch). In paragraphs (3)-(4) of the Office Action, claims 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Gorsuch in view of Yegoshin, U.S. Patent No. 6,711,146 (Yegoshin). In paragraph (5) of the Office Action, claims 9 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gorsuch in view of Schellinger et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,842,122 (Schellinger).

Applicants' attorney respectfully traverses these rejections, however, in order to expedite prosecution, the Applicants have amended the independent claims to include the allowable subject matter of claims 7 and 17. The Applicants reserve the right to file additional claims, broader claims,

or refile these rejected claims, in one or more continuation applications. Silence as to the response to the rejections is not to be considered acceptance of the rejections.

Thus, Applicants' attorney submits that amended independent claims 1 and 11 are allowable over the references. Further, dependent claims 2-10 and 12-20 are submitted to be allowable over the references in the same manner, because they are dependent on independent claims 1 and 11, respectively, and thus contain all the limitations of the independent claims. In addition, dependent claims 2-10 and 12-20 recite additional novel elements not shown by the references.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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